Executive Summary of the Best Practice Group on Admissions

A Best practice is a technique, method, process, or activity that is believed to be more effective at delivering a particular outcome than any other technique, method, or process. The idea is that with proper processes, checks, and testing a desired outcome can be delivered with fewer problems and unforeseen complications. The Best Practice Group on Admissions is comprised of members from the Undergraduate Admissions Office (UG), the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program (Postbac), Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research (GSSWSR), and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GAS). These four departments represent the majority of types of students attending the College. At the core, the goals of admission are to attract, admit, and enroll a cohort of students who will graduate from the College. From the core goals, the mission and process develop for each department.

*The Best Practice Group on Admissions identified 15 best practice topics that help achieve the core goals.

Electronic Communications
Recruitment Travel
Publications
Prospect Cultivation
Managing the Inquiry Pool
Applicant Yield
Technology Initiatives/ Products
Interviewing
Alumni
Financial Aid
Application Processing
Vendors
On and Off Campus Events
Measuring and Reporting
Faculty and Staff

Each department reviewed their admission processes and described how each topic fit or did not fit into the techniques, methods, processes, or activities they performed in their area

The groups found that best practices developed over time for each department as a result of the resources available for example, the ability to input data into PeopleSoft was driven not from the desire not to place the data into the system but from evaluating the most efficient use of time for each the departments. With three of the departments, (UG, GSSWSR, and GAS) transitioning towards centralization for recruitment and the application process, a more unified best practices were developed and will be informed by the resources available. Uniformed best practices will also be informed by the relevance and practicality of the best practice for each area for example, the use of alumni for recruitment.

The 15 best practice topics can be categorized under five overarching themes.

- Strategic use of analytical and historical data to drive informed decisions
- Timely personalized recruitment and application messaging supported by technology
- Systems created to get data in the database, to cultivate prospects, to process applications, to plan events, to update web site, to train & develop staff, and to measure and report
- Establish necessary documentation and frequently refresh documentation of communication and operation calendars, end of year reports, etc.
- Continue to develop a customer service environment

These overarching themes will assist the departments to strive towards techniques, methods, processes, or activities that will more effectively deliver a particular outcome. Many of the departments are already incorporating some of these best practices topics and overarching themes. The outcome of a centralized admissions department will be influenced by the resources and technology available to establish a unified best practices model.

*Attached you will find the identified best practices for each best practice topic. The list is not an exhaustive list but a starting point.*